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Raoul Wallenberg Day, 1989

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

In January, 1944, the United States War Refugee Board asked Sweden to send a representative to Hungary to organize efforts to rescue the Jewish population of Hungary from Nazi annihilation. During the six months he spent in Budapest, the Swedish envoy, Raoul Wallenberg, on his own initiative saved some 100,000 men, women and children from the gas chambers and crematoria of the Nazi death camps.

Raoul Wallenberg risked his own life many times in defying the Nazi authorities in order to save the thousands of innocent people condemned to die not for what they had done, but because they were Jews. His efforts were heroic in the truest sense of the word. Against the tragic backdrop of war and barbarity, Raoul Wallenberg represented the noble and decent conscience of humanity.

On January 13, 1945, Raoul Wallenberg was taken into custody by Soviet forces in Hungary, in violation of international standards concerning diplomatic immunity. The Soviet government initially denied having arrested him, but later stated that a prisoner named Wallenberg died in a Soviet prison on July 17, 1947. Since that date, numerous eyewitness accounts have indicated that Raoul Wallenberg may have survived long after 1947, and indeed may still be alive and imprisoned in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has never produced any evidence of Mr. Wallenberg's death, and has refused to investigate reports that he may still be alive.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IS/FPC/CDR

Date: 10/14/83

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On October 5, 1981, the President of the United States signed into law a proclamation making Raoul Wallenberg an honorary citizen of the United States. This proclamation signified the American people's recognition of his heroism and our refusal to forget him or his bravery and courage in the face of tyranny. .

The American people continue to insist that the Soviet Union has a moral obligation to answer, once and for all, the questions about Raoul Wallenberg's fate. It is our hope that in the spirit of glasnost the Soviet Union will provide a full account. Raoul Wallenberg, and the thousands of people whose lives he saved, are owed no less.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 5, 1989, as Raoul Wallenberg Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, and I urge them to reaffirm their devotion to the just aspirations of all peoples for human liberty.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ____ day of _____, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

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